



## Arbor Heights' School Communicator February 2, 2012

### Winter MAP

This week Arbor Heights teachers sent home Winter MAP Progress Reports. As you begin to analyze the results of your child's winter MAP test results many of you will notice a phenomenon known as *negative growth*, an occurrence most commonly seen in winter testing, **where the RIT scores for some students appear to have fallen from previous levels in the year.** This unexpected fall in a student's score can lead to confusion, misinterpretation, and even frustration when it comes to understanding student data.

**TYPICAL RESULTS:** If we were to plot the fall, winter, and spring RIT scores for all of our students, most results would create a line graph similar to the one presented in *figure 1- page 2*. In this example, positive RIT growth is shown between each testing administration. In these instances, **any movement upward on the RIT scale is considered evidence of student growth and an indicator of effective instruction.**

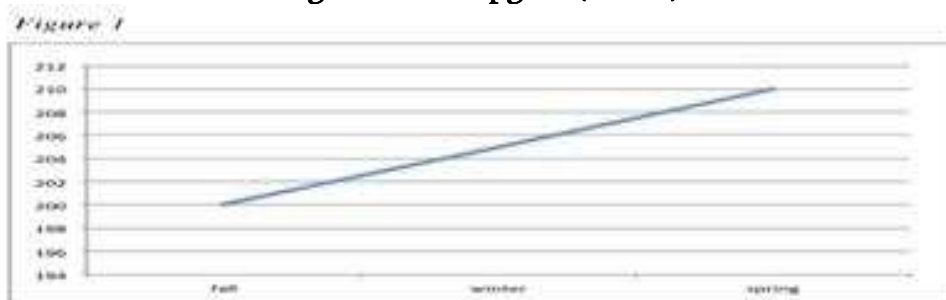
**NEGATIVE GROWTH:** In examining data throughout the year we may come across occasions when students produce seemingly random scores or potentially inaccurate test data. This is most commonly seen in winter due to the limited number of instructional weeks but can occur in spring as well. If we were to plot the fall, winter, and spring RIT scores for these students, we may see graphs that show significant drops at some point in the year. Why these falling outcomes occur and how to deal with them are important discussions we need to undertake. Not only do we need to know that our assessment data is reliable, but even more importantly, **we need to know how to use this data to inform or adjust our instruction in our classrooms accordingly.**

**GATHERING INFORMATION:** While we cannot always ascertain why an anomaly occurred, it is necessary that we gather information around the event in order to inform an appropriate response. *How much time did the student take to complete the test? How much negative growth was actually observed? Have living conditions changed at home? Is the student suffering from poor attitude, anxiety, or motivation issues? Have there been changes in the student's attendance or in classroom instruction? Is the data consistent with other classroom data?*

**PUTTING STUDENT GROWTH IN CONTEXT:** There can be many reasons for a drop in a student's score, but one important factor that must be considered is something known as **standard error of measurement.** This statistical term is used to indicate the error in a reported RIT score, providing a possible range of expected scores for the student generally known as a RIT Range. Typically, this approximates to about plus or minus three RIT on any given test, so a RIT score of 200 would likely yield a RIT Range of 197-203. Let's look at the considerations of this a bit further.

**How Arbor Heights' Teachers utilize information related to NEGATIVE GROWTH:** It is well known that instructional decisions should not be based entirely on one data point, but in situations where negative growth pulls a student's RIT score into a lower RIT Band this is especially true. **In these instances it is essential that we rely on other sources of data to verify the child's instructional level.** By reviewing classroom assignments and assessments we may be able to determine whether the student had an off day during the test or whether there is actually a need to adjust the student's instruction. **Either way, teacher judgment is crucial in this process.** We must remember that each assessment is only a snapshot of a single point in time. Negative growth does not necessarily mean a student is not learning, or that classroom instruction has not been effective, or that MAP data is not reliable. Rather, negative growth allows for additional opportunities to change the way we discuss our students' learning. Instead of ignoring these instances as anomalies or assigning blame for their results, we should recognize negative growth as an important element in the culture of data driven instruction.

**Figure 1 from pg. 1. (MAP)**



### **Seattle School Board approves short-term capacity management options**

A short-term capacity management plan that addresses Seattle Public Schools' enrollment growth was approved 7-0 by the Seattle School Board on Jan. 25.

The plan, which outlines how the School District will accommodate the projected increasing enrollment, was developed following input from the Facilities and Capital Management Advisory Committee (FACMAC). Input was considered from about 300 attendees at six community meetings held between September and December 2010, and also included 550 written comments.

Development of the short-term capacity management plan was coordinated with work on the proposed 2012-13 New Student Assignment Transition Plan, which supports the capacity management work.

#### **The plan includes:**

- Reopening Boren School in West Seattle as an interim site for the 2012-13 school year and having it serve as a K-5 Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) option school for Denny International Middle School and Madison Middle School service areas.
- The installation of portables/repurposed classrooms at various school sites District-wide as needed to address short-term capacity management needs. The exact number of portables and their locations will be based on data obtained during the District's open enrollment period, which will run from **Feb. 27 to March 9**.



## **FEBRUARY**

**Feb 6**

~Monday Morning Monthly Meeting 9:30am

**Feb 7**

~Author Visit **Paul Owen Lewis**

~PTA Board Meeting 7:00pm

**Feb 10**

~PTA Popcorn Friday!

**Feb 16**

~ PTA General Meeting 6:30pm

~ Charter School Forum 6:45pm

**Feb 20-24**

~Mid-Winter Break~

**Feb 29**

~Global Reading Challenge Cafeteria, 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade 1:30-2:15pm

## **MARCH**

**Mar 5**

~Monday Morning Monthly Meeting 9:30am

**Mar 6**

~PTA Board Meeting 7:00pm

**Mar 7**

~ **Early Dismissal 1:00pm**

**Mar 10**

~PTA Family Portrait Day

**March 13**

~Global Reading Challenge Semi-Finals (Downtown Library 10:30am)

**Mar 15**

Bingo Night 6:30pm-8:30pm

**Mar 16**

~NO SCHOOL~

Professional Development Day

**Mar 21-23**

~Secret Garden Book Fair

**Mar 22**

~Young Author's Day & Parent Night 6:30pm-7:30pm

## **APRIL**

**Apr 2**

~Monday Morning Monthly Meeting 9:30am

## **~From the PTA~**

Can you fill a Teacher's Need? Check out the **Teachers Need List** at [arborheights.wikispaces.com/Teacher+Needs+List](http://arborheights.wikispaces.com/Teacher+Needs+List) or grab a paper-apple ornament hanging on the wall in the front lobby behind the lobby showcase. Items do not have to be new, good-used condition is great! Leave the item with Tracy in the office (room # attached) or deliver the item yourself.

**Grants** are fun! Look for one, get approval from Principal Collins and go for it! If you'd like some help, contact PTA Grants Writer Chair, Meri Patton, [meri\\_patton@yahoo.com](mailto:meri_patton@yahoo.com) or (206) 965-0076. More information on grants the PTA has applied for and/or been granted, check out [arborheights.wikispaces.com/AHPTA+Grants](http://arborheights.wikispaces.com/AHPTA+Grants)

**THANK YOU** to everyone - those who baked, procured, set-up, sold, helped clean-up, bought and ate all of the wonderful goodies at the **Winter Concert PTA Bake Sale**. **We raised \$700!**

Registration is still open for **After School Hoops® by One on One Basketball** beginning next week. More class and registration information can be found at [arborheights.wikispaces.com/After+School+Programs](http://arborheights.wikispaces.com/After+School+Programs)

**THANK YOU** to all the families that have returned their **Communications Preference** forms. If you haven't returned one yet, more forms can be found in the office or at [arborheights.wikispaces.com/Forms+Flyers](http://arborheights.wikispaces.com/Forms+Flyers)

**DONATION REQUEST:** We are in need of girls and boys pants size 6-7. Please drop off in the office. Thank you!

## **Save the Date!**

**WHAT:** Charter Schools Forum: Information about charter schools (pro and con)

**WHEN:** Thursday, February 16th, 6:45pm-8:00pm (following a short PTA General Meeting)